



OPPORTUNITY FOR ALL **CANADA'S FIRST POVERTY REDUCTION STRATEGY**

Presentation to the Community Data
Program Annual Meeting

May 15, 2019



Employment and
Social Development Canada

Emploi et
Développement social Canada

Canada 

Minister's Mandate Commitment

The Poverty Reduction Strategy is a mandate letter commitment of the Minister of Families, Children and Social Development. Specifically, the Government committed to developing a Canadian Poverty Reduction Strategy that:

- aligns with and supports existing provincial/territorial/municipal strategies;
- sets targets to reduce poverty; and,
- includes a plan to measure and publicly report on progress.

THE JOURNEY TO Opportunity for All

Engaging with Canadians

IN PERSON



13 sessions led by Government of Canada officials in collaboration with provinces,

territories, Indigenous groups or organizations

29 meetings with multiple levels of government, including Canadian municipalities

12 roundtables with stakeholders

4 public town hall events

4 roundtables with Indigenous Leadership

Over **600 Canadians** consulted through **33 conversations** in **9 different** provinces and territories

Over **5,500 Canadians** reached through the **Tackling Poverty Together Project**

The **Ministerial Advisory Committee** on Poverty brought together a diverse group of 17 leaders, academic experts and practitioners working in the field of poverty reduction, and individuals who have experienced poverty first hand.

The Committee provided advice to the Minister of Families, Children and Social Development on a range of poverty-related issues.

National Poverty Conference
(September 27-28, 2017)

Release of the What We Heard Report
(February 20, 2018)

ONLINE



1,127

EMAIL
SUBMISSIONS



584

COMPLETED
SURVEYS



199

STORIES &
COMMENTS

Youth Contest
#ReducePoverty in Canada



X 64

YOUTH SUBMISSIONS

The three pillars of the Poverty Reduction Strategy

- *Opportunity for All* was informed by a cross-country consultation process from February to October 2017.
- A summary report of what Canadians told us, entitled “Canadian Poverty Reduction Strategy: What We Heard About Poverty So Far”, was released on February 20, 2018.
- Three major themes emerged from the engagement and form the basis of the three pillars of the Poverty Reduction Strategy:
 - **Dignity:** Lifting Canadians out of poverty by ensuring basic needs – such as safe and affordable housing, healthy food, and healthcare – are met;
 - **Opportunity and Inclusion:** Helping Canadians join the middle class by promoting full participation in society and equality of opportunity; and,
 - **Resilience and Security:** Supporting the middle class by protecting Canadians from falling into poverty and by supporting income security and resilience.

***Opportunity For All* – Canada's First Poverty Reduction Strategy**

- The Government of Canada released a poverty reduction strategy for the first time in Canada's history – it includes long-term commitments to guide current and future government actions and investments:
 - ❖ Canada's Official Poverty Line
 - ❖ Poverty Reduction Targets
 - ❖ Data and Measurement Plan
 - ❖ National Advisory Council on Poverty
 - ❖ Poverty Reduction Legislation

Canada's Official Poverty Line

For the first time in Canada's history, the Government sets an official measure of income poverty: Canada's Official Poverty Line

- Calculated based on the costs of a basket of goods and services that individuals and families require to meet their basic needs and achieve a modest standard of living.
- This basket, currently known as the Market Basket Measure, includes items such as healthy food, appropriate shelter and home maintenance, and clothing and transportation, as well as other goods and services that permit engagement in the community, particularly for children, youth, parents and seniors.
- Canada's Official Poverty Line will reflect poverty thresholds for 50 regions across Canada, including 19 communities, and will also include the three territories.
- The basket will be updated regularly to ensure it continues to reflect what Canadians need to meet their basic needs and achieve a modest standard of living.

Poverty Reduction Targets

The vision of *Opportunity for All* – Canada's First Poverty Reduction Strategy is a Canada without poverty.

- Canada's Official Poverty Line will be used to measure progress toward two targets for poverty reduction, using a baseline year of 2015:
 - ❖ Reduce the rate of poverty by 20% by 2020 – **Target met in 2017, three years earlier than expected.**
 - ❖ Reduce the rate of poverty by 50% by 2030.
- The targets are aligned with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals.

Improving Poverty Measurement

As announced in Budget 2018, the Government is investing \$12.1 million over five years, and \$1.5 million per year thereafter, to address key gaps and improve poverty measurement. This funding will support the following streams of work:

Update/review the MBM and Improve the Canadian Income Survey

- Review the 2008 base and create a new base which will be used to calculate poverty rates Strategy's baseline year of 2015 and for subsequent years as well.
- Conduct annual updates to account for inflation.
- Conduct comprehensive reviews on a regular basis.
- Expand the Canadian Income Survey to inform Canada's Official Poverty Line in the territories.
- Improve the Survey's robustness (such as timeliness and sample size).

Create an Indicator Dashboard

- The Dashboard will allow Canadians to track progress against the targets and other dimensions of poverty aligned with the three pillars. See Annex A of *Opportunity for All* for list of indicators.
- Where possible, this data will be disaggregated by geographic and socio-demographic characteristics to help better understand groups most at risk of poverty, and determine what characteristics make an individual more likely to need support.

Research on Concepts of Income

- Address gaps in knowledge and understanding of the various dimensions of poverty in Canada (e.g., including rent subsidies into the measurement of income).

National Advisory Council on Poverty



- The Government is establishing an independent National Advisory Council on Poverty with a whole-of-government perspective on poverty reduction with a mandate to:
 - ❖ Provide advice to the Minister of Families, Children and Social Development on programs and activities that support poverty reduction in Canada.
 - ❖ Track and report on progress on poverty reduction efforts through an annual report that will be tabled in Parliament.
 - ❖ Continue a national dialogue with Canadians on poverty including the academic community and other experts, Indigenous persons and persons with lived experience of poverty.
 - ❖ The call for submissions for the Advisory Council ran from December 18, 2018 to January 29, 2019 and garnered significant interest from applicants across Canada.

Poverty Reduction Legislation



- On April 8, 2019, the Government tabled in the House of Commons Budget Implementation Act, 2019, No. 1, which includes a proposed Poverty Reduction Act.
- If passed, the Poverty Reduction Act would entrench Canada's Official Poverty Line, the targets and the National Advisory Council on Poverty into law.

Working with Indigenous Peoples

- The Government is taking a distinctions-based approach to implement initiatives in support of the Strategy, that specifically reflects First Nations, Inuit and Métis perspectives on poverty, including:
 - Indigenous Early Learning and Child Care
 - National Housing Strategy
 - Indigenous Skills and Employment Training Program
- The Government will also work with Indigenous peoples to identify and co-develop indicators that align with First Nations, Inuit and Métis concepts of poverty.

Working with Provinces, Territories and Communities



- Partnerships are essential to implementing poverty reduction strategies that work for all Canadians.
- A joint statement on poverty reduction was released by provincial and territorial ministers on July 31, 2018. Federal-Provincial/Territorial (F-P/T) collaboration will be guided by this statement and the Poverty Reduction Strategy.
- The Government will continue to work with provinces and territories, and municipalities, to address mutual priorities; coordinate efforts; avoid duplication; and share data and best practices.

Going Forward: Canada in 2030



- The Strategy is both a framework for actions that the Government has taken, but also to guide the actions that it will take in the future.
- Data and evidence gaps will be identified and addressed.
- The Government will work with partners across all parts of society to achieve our vision: including provinces and territories, Indigenous peoples, local community groups on the front lines; academics, the private sector, and most importantly: those with lived experience of poverty.

Next Steps



Work is underway to implement the Poverty Reduction Strategy:

- National consultations to review and update Canada's Official Poverty Line took place between September 2018 and January 2019. Consultations will inform steps to follow on completing the review of Canada's Official Poverty Line.
- The first iteration of the Poverty Reduction Indicator Dashboard will be published online in 2019.
- National Advisory Council on Poverty is expected to be formed in 2019.
- The Poverty Reduction Act is part of Budget Implementation Act, 2019, No. 1. Passage is dependent on the legislative process.